

FORWARD

I am pleased to share with you the good news that *Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel* (HLM) was officially launched on March 29, 2007 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

HLM is a non-profit, non-governmental development organization, registered in January 2006 under the Ministry of Justice in Ethiopia. The NGO is organized to support human resource and institutional capacity building through transfer of knowledge, skills, technology and other resources from the Ethiopian Diaspora and friends of Ethiopia into the country. HLM envisages the full mobilization and utilization of the Ethiopian Diaspora's intellectual and other resources to facilitate optimal brain gain and capacity building for accelerated and sustainable development and prosperity of the Ethiopian people. HLM operates in partnership with individuals, associations, as well as national, regional, bilateral and international development forces in and outside the country.

The official launch of HLM took place at the Ghion Hotel in Addis Ababa in the presence of H.E Ato Fikru Dessalegne, State Minister for the Ministry of Capacity Building. Over 150 participants representing government and non-government organizations, civil society, the private sector, the UN, bilateral agencies, embassies, reporters from national and international media and members of the Ethiopian Diaspora attended the occasion.

At the launch, the strategic plan of HLM was discussed and endorsed. Also Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Health and Education shared their experiences on utilizing Diaspora resources, while the International Organization on Migration (IOM) spoke on their regional and international experiences. The Ministry of Youth and Sports shared their views on the importance of youth participation and networking. One of the highlights of the discussion was a personal experience shared by a Diaspora member currently working in Ethiopia. This stimulated a lot of useful discussion on current issues, practices, constraints and opportunities on Ethiopian Diaspora's participation and contribution to the country's socio-economic development.

During the discussion, it was encouraging to note the interest expressed by all participants on the importance and timeliness of the creation of HLM as an indigenous NGO to facilitate and provide the much-needed institutional link and serve as a bridge between the Ethiopian Diaspora and institutions in the country. This would improve partnerships and networking for the incremental channeling of Diaspora resources into the country to strengthen collaboration with professionals and institutions in the country for enhanced capacity building and synergy for accelerated and sustained development. At the discussion, it was very clear to note that, in collaboration with stakeholders and

development forces in and outside the country, HLM could support (a) the strengthening of networks, partnerships and coordination among institutions, individuals and organizations working on Diaspora related initiatives; (b) facilitate the compilation (data base) of and the two-way flow of essential and up-to-date information on identified priority needs in the country as well as the available resources among the Ethiopian Diaspora and friends of Ethiopia; (c) streamline processes, systems and guidelines for improved participation and collaboration and (d) finally, implement programs and projects that involve Diaspora input to strengthen human resource and institutional capacity in Ethiopia through a win-win partnership between the two groups.

I am sharing this good news with you for your information and by way of expressing my appreciation and thanks for your encouragement and support in the creation of HLM. It will be greatly appreciated if you could share this good news with others that have interest on the Ethiopian Diaspora's involvement in the country's human resource and institutional capacity building efforts.

Based on its strategic plan, *Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel* has identified the following four areas as its immediate priorities for action:

- 1) Strengthen HLM's organizational setup to undertake planned activities;
- 2) Develop a dynamic and interactive website that would link Ethiopians globally and serve as a gateway to Ethiopian professionals in the Diaspora as well as to friends of Ethiopia to increase opportunities for Ethiopia's brain gain through enhanced collaboration, participation and partnership with professionals and institutions in the country;
- 3) Document existing information on experiences pertaining to the Diaspora and undertake and document situation and process analysis to have better understanding of existing situations, processes, systems, guidelines, needs and constraints as well as establish a database on available Diaspora resources. These information would serve as baseline as well as help to determine priorities in planning and implementation as well as identification of monitoring indicators; and
- 4) Mobilize financial and other resources to enable HLM to support and facilitate the implementation of identified priority interventions

I would like to take this opportunity to express HLM's desire to join hands with all organizations and individuals that have interest in strengthening the networking and partnership opportunities for the channeling of the Diaspora's intellectual and other

resources into the country, including participation and networking among youth in and outside the country, to contribute to the sustainable development and prosperity of the Ethiopian people.

I would also like to inform you that HLM is planning a one-day symposium at the end of August or beginning of September in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This will be a great opportunity to meet with and have interactive dialogue with members of the Ethiopian Diaspora that will be visiting Ethiopia for the Millennium Celebration and relevant panelists from the country. This symposium will enable us to introduce HLM and its objectives to the visiting Diaspora members and get their views and better insight on how best HLM can serve their needs and that of local institutions. Furthermore, during the discussion with panelists from key organizations and institutions, HLM can gather useful idea as to what the expectation of some of the institutions are from the Diaspora and vice versa.

As a local Ethiopian NGO, I believe that HLM has a comparative advantage and can serve as a major link between the Diaspora and institutions in the country and can facilitate enhanced implementation of projects to achieve our common goal.

HLM expects to have several contacts in different countries and regions wherein members of the Ethiopian Diaspora and friends of Ethiopia are found. I look forward to hearing from and working with you in the future.

Dr. Tewabech Bishaw

HLM Founder & Managing Director

WELCOME ADDRESS

W/o Mebrat Wolde-Tensae
Vice Chairperson of Board of Management, Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel

Guest of Honor, Ato Fikru Dessalegne, State Minister, Ministry of Capacity Building of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia,
H.E. Professor Mesfin Abebe, Minister and Advisor to Deputy Prime Minister,
Ato Fiseha Tesfu, Director General, Department of Ethiopian Expatriates Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Senior Officials from Ministries of Health, Education and Youth and Sports,
Excellencies and Members of the Diplomatic Mission,
Representatives of the United Nations Organizations,
Representatives of the International Organization for Migration,
Senior Officials from Public and Private Higher Institutions of Learning,
Representatives of Civil Society, Non-Governmental and Private Sector Organizations,
Members of the Ethiopian Diaspora who are here with us,
Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Board of Management, the Founding Members, the Managing Director of Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel, and on my own behalf, I would like to welcome you all to this important gathering, while at the same time expressing my gratitude for dedicating your valuable time to this important event—the launching of “*Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel*” (HLM).

We are here today to celebrate the launch of Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel, which is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that focuses on human resource and institutional capacity building by mobilizing the Ethiopian Diaspora and Friends of Ethiopia to have active role in the development of Ethiopia and its population.

Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel strives to establish and strengthen networks, contribute to creating conducive environment and institutional networks to facilitate the inflow of Diaspora resources.

The rationale for the establishment of Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel includes:

- a. The existence of large number of highly qualified Ethiopian Diaspora members who left and continue to leave the country.

- b.** The rapid expansion of basic development institutions within the private and public sector of the country, requiring additional skilled and knowledgeable professionals.
- c.** The willingness among members of the Diaspora and friends of Ethiopia to participate and support the country's development efforts.
- d.** The lack of institutional mechanism to facilitate processes to mobilize the Diaspora resources into the country, to meet the needs of institutions locally.
- e.** To bring new knowledge, appropriate state of the art technology, and insight based on experiences that could capitalize development initiatives including policy.

It is in the context of the above that Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel has developed its four objectives, which are stated below:

1. Bring in the Diaspora to support in strengthening of institutional capacity in the country.
2. Establish collaborations between institutions in Ethiopia and those in the Diaspora so that there is increased access and availability of these institutions locally, for the Diaspora to participate in training and collaborative research.
3. Improve networking between youth locally and in the Diaspora to establish friendly relations and joint project for cultural exchange and future collaboration.
4. Provide platform for development dialogue between the Diaspora and local professionals to enhance Ethiopia's development effort.

Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel as a new indigenous non-governmental organization, focusing on capacity building, will actively engage in undertaking the important but challenging task of mobilizing Diaspora resources.

Dr Tewabech Bishaw, who is the founder and Managing Director of Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel, will later present the Strategic Development Plan, which will give us the opportunity to review, comment and endorse the document for our future action.

Before I leave the floor, I would like to express my gratitude to all who encouraged us in our effort for the realization of this non-governmental organization and the launching meeting of today.

I thank you all for your attention.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Ato Fikru Dessalegne
State Minister, Ministry of Capacity Building,
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia,

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am honored to be here today to address this august gathering on the occasion of the launch of Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel, (for those of you who do not understand Amharic the name Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel means Center for Cooperative Development).

I commend and congratulate the organizers of this meeting and all those who dedicated their time and other resources in the development of this NGO. I would specifically like to thank Dr. Tewabech Bishaw, the founder of HLM for her vision, intellectual input, time and financial resources in bringing to life this valuable center. I understand from the strategic planning document of the center that objectives are clearly focused on human and institutional capacity building for sustainable development - a core business subject the Ministry of Capacity Building.

This is indeed a noble idea and very relevant to what the country, its institutions and people are engaged in today. As you all know the government of Ethiopia is striving towards ending poverty, and attaining the Millennium Development Goals through implementation of the PASDEP. However the achievement of these goals cannot be realized through government efforts alone. It requires the collective efforts of all our partners in development, NGO's, UN Agencies, International Regional and, Bilateral Organizations; Donor Agencies, Civil Society Organizations, Professional Associations, the Private Sector, the community and other development forces. The strategic planning document of HLM has clearly indicated that the center is organized to facilitate the transfer and utilization of vital intellectual resources - knowledge, skills, technology and other resources from the Ethiopian Diaspora and friends of Ethiopia, in collaboration and partnership with professionals and institutions in the country, support in human resource and institutional capacity building towards sustainable development and prosperity of the Ethiopian people. I am therefore pleased to say that HLM will have an important role to play as a partner in the national effort for sustainable development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Human resource is a vital and critical ingredient in development and building the capacity of this important resource is recognized and prioritized as essential for accelerated and sustainable development of Ethiopia. In this regard, the country is actively engaged in implementing a mix of strategies in its development effort. To this end, the education sector has now become one of our prominent sectors and there is rapid expansion of public and private sector primary and secondary schools; colleges and universities; professional training centers as well as centers for research and development. Also several service and development sectors and institutions are engaged in continuing education initiatives to further develop the capacity of their staff to enable them acquire relevant and up to date knowledge, skills and attitude that are required to efficiently undertake their tasks and meet their organizational goals. Also, sectors like Health, Engineering, Agriculture, Science and Technology in both the private and public sectors are expanding at a fast rate and requiring qualified and skilled human resources in large numbers.

Despite this encouraging effort, the country is currently experiencing shortages of qualified professionals to fully staff the various institutions in both the public and private sectors. The shortage continues to increase as the country is accelerating the expansion and growth of its infrastructure to bring about the much needed improvement in access and the quality of services.

One of the contributing factors for these shortages is the exodus of a large number of qualified professionals in various disciplines over the last several decades. As we all know, this phenomenon of migration of skilled and educated personnel which nowadays is known as “brain drain” is not unique to Ethiopia. It has long been a critical and unsolved development problem. Every country in the world loses through migration of highly educated and skilled individuals. However since the 1960’s the brain drain has been associated with the outflow of skilled individuals from the developing to the developed world.

As a result of this outward movement of qualified human resources, developing countries like Ethiopia, manifest a deterioration of basic social services as well as slow development of the private sector, thereby heightening their dependence on costly foreign expertise. The prime victims of brain drain - the loss of skilled intellectual and technical labor through the movement of such labor to more favorable geographic, economic, or professional environments - are higher institutions of learning.

Different research findings show that many developing countries are increasingly tapping to their émigrés for their development. The development contributions of émigrés not only include foreign currency remittances but also serve as visiting scholars, create virtual networks, and generally contribute to shaping the direction of the scholarly environment. The history of some newly industrialized countries like India, South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan indicate that members of the Diaspora can be positive driving forces for innovation in many sectors of society.

Recently, there has been a new initiative to tap African expatriates for the development of Africa. The African Union (AU) has invited Africa's Diaspora to actively take part in the region's development.

The Ethiopian government is positive and keen to involve members of the Diaspora in its development initiatives. It recognizes the Diaspora as a potentially useful intellectual resource. To facilitate this it has established government organs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Ministry of Capacity Building (MOCB) and in the different Regional Administrations to address issues, and coordinate Diaspora input for the nation's development. The government also revised relevant policies by issuing the 270/2002 proclamation which provides additional rights for Foreign Nationals of Ethiopian Origin. Accordingly, Foreign Nationals of Ethiopian Origin have the right to enter the country without an entry visa or live in Ethiopia without a residence permit, be employed in Ethiopia without a work permit and invest as a domestic investor in Ethiopia under current investment laws.

Efforts are thus being made to strengthen enabling environment to facilitate partnership and collaboration with committed émigrés of Ethiopian origin and friends of Ethiopia. However, existing mechanisms have to be streamlined and others might need to be put in place and strengthened for effective and coordinated collaboration to ensure continued in-flow and efficient harnessing of available intellectual resources to significantly contribute to mainstream development and social change in Ethiopia.

Despite the continuing outflow of Ethiopia's qualified human resources, it is encouraging to note that there is a growing realization by the Diaspora about the unique role that they can play to promote development in Ethiopia in meaningful ways. For instance there are encouraging beginnings in the health, and education sectors. With this spirit of collaboration, several initiatives have emerged wherein individuals and organized groups from the Ethiopian Diaspora and friends of Ethiopia continue to engage in Ethiopia's development.

I am pleased to note that according to the IOM database, over 520 individual Ethiopians in the Diaspora with qualifications ranging from diplomas to post-graduate/doctoral degrees, have continued to express interest to participate in development initiatives in Ethiopia through investments, virtual arrangements (such as online universities), one time missions, short term stay, sequenced repeat visits, medium and long term visits, and/or permanent relocation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I, therefore, call on all development partners including NGOs, donors, UN and bilateral agencies, the Private Sector and all organizations inside and outside the country to coordinate their efforts in creating enabling environment for the Diaspora to come back to their country of origin and participate in all rounded development efforts of the nation. I would also like to encourage Ethiopian Diaspora to actively participate and contribute to development of their country and prosperity of the Ethiopian people.

It is in this context, and as we herald our new millennium that I am happy today, to officially launch Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel as one of our partners in development focusing on mobilizing this critical and vital intellectual resource into the country for our development agenda.

I thank you for your attention.

OPPORTUNITIES AND ISSUES IN DIASPORA PARTICIPATION

Ato Fiseha Tesfu
Director General, Department of Ethiopian Expatriates Affairs,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Distinguished Guests,

Dear Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all I would like to thank Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel for taking the initiative to establish an indigenous non-governmental organization specifically dealing with Ethiopian Diaspora issues.

As it is well known, the Ethiopian Diaspora left its country of origin in the last four to five decades due to different push and pull factors; it spans across many continents and has financial, technical, and other resources at its disposal.

In recognition to the roles the Ethiopian Diaspora could play with respect to the development of the country of origin, the FDRE government has clearly stipulated this fact in its Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy Document.

The Document States,

“Regardless of the diversity of their views, the Ethiopian Community shares strong national sentiments and is without doubt keen to contribute to the welfare and progress of Ethiopia and its people”.

The Government, in this regard, has been undertaking necessary measures to facilitate the deployment of their capital, the use of their know-how and access to science and technology as well as creating institutional mechanisms that could facilitate their engagements at Federal and Regional levels to realize this policy and strategy.

It is in view of this policy and strategy of the Government that we appreciate and welcome Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel as a partner in the effort to harness the resources of the Diaspora for national development and we are ready to support its endeavor to meet its objectives.

However, I would like to emphasize the need to avoid duplication in our effort to deal with members of the Diaspora and focus in complementing each other to face the challenges and create a win-win situation in achieving our goals.

To this effect, I would like to mention a specific issue with regards to the process of creating linkages and partnership between Ethiopian professionals working abroad and local institutions.

Often times, misunderstanding arises in the government's drive to build capacity at home with expatriate employees vis-à-vis Ethiopian professionals abroad. The government and the people have invested from their meager resources to educate our professionals residing abroad and accordingly expect their voluntary participation to pay back what they owe to their people.

In view of this, we should not expect foreign expatriates from other countries to serve us with local payment and accommodation standards, as they have no national commitment to bring our people out of abject poverty. This commitment is primarily expected from our Ethiopian brothers and sisters living abroad.

Finally, I would like to reiterate our readiness to work in collaboration with Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel and other relevant institutions in enhancing the role of the Diaspora in all areas of development.

Thank you!

Country Experience on Diaspora Participation in the Education Sector

W/o Fantanesh Tilahun

**Department Head, Higher Education System Transformation and Improvement,
Ministry of Education**

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor to me to address this important meeting that hoped to contribute for the capacity building of the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Government of Ethiopia places a very high priority on poverty reduction strategy as part of its overall goals for socio-economic development. In order to realize this strategy the role of well-trained and qualified manpower equipped with modern managerial, technical skills is indispensable.

Cognizant of this fact, a rapid expansion of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and higher education institutions has been undertaken under the implementation of the Education Sector Development Program. As a result 200 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institutes and 21 Universities are established during the last ten years.

Moreover students and professionals have been sent abroad for further education, hoping that they return back to their country and close the professional gap.

However, the available researches noted that around 50 percent of Ethiopians who went abroad and completed their studies have not returned home in the past 10-15 years.

The result is particularly severe in medicine, sciences and engineering fields. It is estimated that one-third of health specialists have already left the country seeking better employment opportunities in North America, Europe and South Africa. The departure of medical personnel forced the medical schools and hospitals to close their departments.

Although effort is being made to increase the supply and improve their professional capacity through various programs, lack of sufficient number of qualified teachers is a persistent problem. The problem is very acute in the higher education sector. To solve this problem, institutions are hiring expatriate professionals from different countries.

From this information it is clear that the brain drain has had and continues to have a significant negative impact on Ethiopia's ability to fill highly skilled positions in all fields of specialization.

Due to the accumulated wealth of knowledge, capital and technical expertise, the Diaspora is in better position to engage in their country's development. The accumulated wealth of knowledge and expertise in different fields will enable them to play a significant part in bringing the desired speedy socio-economic development.

In line with this, the government has been taking measures to create conducive investment atmosphere for the Diaspora.

As a result, 808 members of the Diaspora invested in different areas which are identified as priority areas by the government from 1998-2003.

Their contribution has been expressed in the form of knowledge and technology transfer, technical and financial assistance.

Above all the investment that they are making returning from their host countries has a significant contribution on creating job opportunities for technical and vocational graduates.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although encouraging results have been registered so are, those efforts are somewhat uncoordinated lacking continuity and predictability.

Therefore, coordinated efforts need to maximize the Diaspora potentials for their country's development.

The elements for rapid economic growth for developing country like Ethiopia are education, entrepreneurial culture and above all close ties and network with their overseas expatriates and friends of Ethiopia, for access to their capital, trading and financial network, and above all access to their acquired knowledge.

Diaspora are fortunate to be conduits and catalysts for transferring knowledge. In addition to this, they can play a role in encouraging foreign investors to invest in Ethiopia and they can look for markets for Ethiopian products in their host countries.

For the realization of the above even much more targeted and coordinated effort would be vital.

To coordinate and guide the self-initiated activities of the Ethiopian Diaspora, there is a need to develop a profile, which contains the list of the Diaspora and their field of capabilities.

An accurate and continuing database on the impact of the brain drain helps to formulate policy for those areas where the brain drain is negatively affecting Ethiopia's development priorities.

Collaboration with universities on research and the development of the curriculum is important to coordinate future employment possibilities.

The role that information and communication technology and virtual networks can play is vital. These networks can link Ethiopian professionals overseas with their counterparts.

Expanded use of virtual means for the generation and retention of knowledge rather than a reliance on the physical movement of people would reduce the temptation to remain abroad and reduce costs. Greater use of distance education is another possibility.

There should be a focus on creating centers of excellence in critical fields of medicine and science at universities and hospitals.

To this end, concerned bodies such as government, private sector and NGOs have to bolster their efforts.

In this regard the initiative of HLM is appreciated to network and coordinate different interventions in the country and abroad.

Dear Participants,

It is believed that your contribution in providing constructive feedback for the strategic plan will empower the organization's efforts.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH INVOLVEMENT AND NETWORKING

**W/o Misrak Assefa
Representative, Ministry of Youth and Sport**

Distinguished Guests,

Dear Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is an opportunity for me to deliver a speech on behalf of the Ministry of Youth and Sport on this special occasion.

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has been undertaking measures that enable the Ethiopian youth to be citizens with democratic outlook, professional competence, skill and ethics so that they can actively, efficiently and widely participate in and benefit from the country's ongoing activities that are aimed at attaining development. To this effect the government of Ethiopia formulated a comprehensive national youth policy that could address the issue of youth.

It is true that drafting policy by itself is not an end to address the multi dimensional problems of youth manifested as economic, social and political challenges. To put the policy into effect, the Ministry of Youth and Spots as a responsible government organ to coordinate and follow up the issues of youth at federal level formulated a ten years strategic plan, five years youth development program and Ethiopian youth development package. The documents have been familiarized, disseminated and implemented. So far, encouraging results have been registered by the government, non-government organizations and youth associations.

Excellencies,

Dear Participants,

As the national youth policy clearly stated regarding the national and international partnership which is directly related to the objectives of Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel, youth shall be provided with technical and professional support in their effort to create unity and solidarity at regional and national levels, so as to ensure their common rights and benefits. On the other hand, steps shall be taken to the effect that the youth shall establish

bilateral and multilateral relations of cooperation that would enable them create unity and partnerships, which in turn would put them in a better position to act jointly at continental and international levels. In this regard, I would like to remind you again that the objectives of Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel are highly related to this specific national youth policy issue.

Hence, I would like to appreciate, encourage and congratulate the newly established organization's initiatives which are mainly focused to create a system that enables young Ethiopians in the country and Diaspora to work as a team on joint projects.

In conclusion, I would like to assure you that you have the support of the Ministry of Youth and Sports in your endeavors.

Thank you!

COUNTRY EXPERIENCE ON DIASPORA PARTICIPATION IN THE HEALTH SECTOR

Dr Hassen Mohammed
Head, Department of Health Services, Ministry of Health

Thank you very much.

My apologies for being late, it is because we had other meetings in the office.

As you all know there is a huge gap in the health service delivery in this country, both in terms of coverage and quality. So the involvement of the Diaspora in assisting to improve the coverage and the quality of health services will have great importance. Like other developing countries in the world, Ethiopia also suffers the problem of brain drain in the health sector. Studies show that there are many expatriate knowledge networks around the world whose purpose is to connect expatriates among themselves. In Ethiopia there are groups like Ethiopian North American Health Professionals Association, Ethiopian Health and Health Associated Professionals in Sweden, Group Against Poverty and AIDS, People-to-People and others. Even individuals coming from Diaspora are very much interested to assist in the service delivery of the nation. The Ministry is doing its best to prepare conducive environment to serve the Diaspora in order to be involved in filling the huge service delivery gap in the country.

The opportunities, I think, have been mentioned by others. They have established government organs within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Capacity Building and in the different Regional Administrations to address issues and coordinate the Diaspora input for the nation's development. There are also revised/relevant policies which provide additional right for foreign nationals of Ethiopian origin. Foreign nationals of Ethiopian origin have the right to enter the country without an entry visa; to live in Ethiopia without a resident permit; to be employed in Ethiopia without work permit; and to invest as a domestic investor in Ethiopia under current investment laws, and this investment includes also in the health sector. So in general there is a conducive and enabling environment that facilitates the participation of the Diaspora and friends of Ethiopia to exert their efforts towards the development of the nation as a whole and the improvement of the health service delivery in particular. So the Federal Ministry of Health encourages the expansion of private facilities, those for profit and non-profit and particularly to rural areas, because the health service delivery centers are more concentrated in the big cities and the majority while living in the rural areas need to get better health service. And as you all know due to lack of many services in the country the

number of patients referred for treatment abroad is very high. So the Diaspora have lots of areas to get involved in the delivery of the health service in the country and this is in short what I have.

Thank you very much.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN DIASPORA PARTICIPATION

Ato Biruk Asmellash

Representative, International Organization for Migration, IOM

Thank you, Chairperson.

I will briefly talk on the International Organization for Migration's international and regional experience on the issue of brain drain. To address African brain drain, IOM initiated a program called "Return for Qualified African Nationals", from 1983 up to 1999. During that period, 2000 professionals and 2500 fellowship students returned to 12 targeted and 29 non-targeted African countries. The external terminal evaluation held at the time showed more than 90 percent of the persons who returned to their countries remained there for more than two years. The 12 targeted countries included Angola, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Zambia. There were also other non-targeted countries.

The bottlenecks observed were: weak government ownership and mismatch between supply of professionals and local demand; prolonged search for jobs; lengthy recruitment processes; lack of trust on Diasporas; inadequate policies in the countries of origin to utilize and attract qualified returnees; lack of conducive environment and lack of brain exchange at intra-regional level.

The issues which emerged were: African governments needed to see Africans in the Diaspora as valuable resource. There was a need for aggressive policies for networking with migrated brain; need for improvement in the quality and focus in the area of higher education; an increased government assurance for stability, good governance; attractive remuneration; and active participation of the private sector.

The African Diasporas are strategic assets in building the African capacity. They are social, financial, intellectual and political capital and are Africa's biggest aid donors. They share a common vision and commitment for Africa's development and have their cultural and linguistic advantages.

There was a paradigm shift observed that the concept of returnees was already outdated and it is mobility which must be given priority benefiting both host and origin countries.

Following this the "Migration for Development in Africa", MIDA, was initiated later. It is a demand-driven capacity building program with flexible transfer options of vital skills

and resources of the African Diaspora to their countries of origin. The transfer options include virtual telework or satellite based technology systems, sequenced and repeated visits to their home countries, investment options and permanent relocations.

MIDA also aims at strengthening institutional capacity of African governments, involving participating African countries at program planning stages for forging partnership between governments, private sector, institutions and donors involved in capacity building programs in Africa as well. The MIDA strategy process include firstly, participating African countries identify priority areas, investment possibilities, compiling assignment job vacancies and building synergies between all stakeholders. Secondly, the host countries identify available skills, financial and other resource of Africans in the Diaspora for virtual telework, sequenced repeated visits and permanent assignments in African countries; also, identify Africans in the Diaspora with the necessary financial resources to invest in Africa. Thirdly, IOM matches identified priority skill needs with the identified skills, financial and other resources of Africans in the Diaspora; establishes and maintains updated databank of identified skill needs in African countries and skills available in the Diaspora; recruits and trains personnel to manage the transfer of skills and other resources of Africans in the Diaspora for development programs in Africa; provides assistance where required with travel arrangement (pre-departure), transit, reception and post arrival adjustments.

Implemented MIDA programs in Africa include MIDA-Great Lakes, which run for three years in the DRC, Burundi, Rwanda; MIDA-Guinea, which has run for eighteen months; MIDA-Ethiopia-Ghana that run for ten months, again MIDA-Ghana that run for six months; MIDA-Health which run for 12 months in 46 African countries; and we had MIDA-Great Lakes, involvement of Women for Conflict Resolution, which ran for 12 months.

IOM has also initiated Migration for Development in Ethiopia with its partners, following the processes that are mentioned earlier. The expected results out of the program are highly skilled and qualified Ethiopians participated in the program, the skill gap in Ethiopia and the potential qualified Diaspora are identified, database and network among Diaspora associations established, stakeholders forum established, institutional capacity of Ethiopia strengthen to continuous skill transfer sustainably.

I thank you.

A DIASPORA PERSPECTIVE

Ato Elias Melake
Member of Ethiopian Diaspora

Your Excellencies,

Dignitaries,

Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all I would like to congratulate the founders of HLM, for the long overdue organization. As it is important to encourage and tap the resources of the Ethiopian Diaspora, it is also vital to coordinate and have clear guideline to attract such needed resources from the Diaspora. It is also important to know that the Government of Ethiopia is committed to work with the professionals in the Diaspora and discussions and conferences like this are very important here in Ethiopia as well as abroad. The large number of professionals residing in countries such as the United States and many European countries, I think, lack the knowledge that organizations like this exist and they do not know the level of commitment of the Ethiopian Government to the Diaspora. So it is my wish that HLM take conferences like this abroad and organize the Diaspora to come to understanding the commitment of the Government as well as secure the commitment of the Diaspora in coming here. As a member of the Diaspora who lives here in Addis now, I would like to share some of my experiences in coming here. We hear so much of the Government's commitment to assist the Diaspora to invest and to transfer knowledge. And we are here to do the work. However, when we start doing the work, we find the guidelines are not clearly stated. So we go from one office to another wanting to know where to go next, what to do next. I hope HLM will devise and create a way to guide the Diaspora as to where to go, what to do and how to complete things in the different Government offices. As for the Diaspora, our expectations of this place should not be so high. The difficulty that we face is not an easy one. So we need to assist them. It is understandable that we need to help but also we have to help organizations like HLM to tell them where we help so they can help us to organize with the Government bodies or organizations to facilitate our needs. That is all I have to say.

Thank you.

Question/Comment: Ato Fiseha Tesfu, MoFA

[The comment is given in response to the statements made by various speakers including a member of the Diaspora]

Thank you chair,

It is a fact we actually recognize, as the representative from the Diaspora mentioned, that once they are here they almost get lost; and it is a reality. I will give a brief overview of what we in the Ministry are trying to do in this regard. It has been more than six or seven years since we have been trying to deal with the Diaspora Ethiopians and foreigners of Ethiopian origin through our embassies. The Ministry has drawn an actual plan of action as to how we try to engage them. As we all know, for example, when there was draught in the country or during the conflict with Eritrea there were many rallying issues that brought many Ethiopians living abroad in support of their people as well as in cooperating with the Government to deal with the issues. But one of the weaknesses that we have realized is that we have not been coordinating effectively, firstly, among ourselves, among Government institutions themselves; secondly, even in our engagement with the Diaspora. It has not been, as my brother said, a clearly stated directive based approach. As of last year, 2006, we in the Ministry realized this and since we were in the process of finalizing our business process reengineering, what we have tried to do is first thing organize ourselves among the Ministries, Federal Institutions and other Governmental Institutions that need to coordinate their activities; because each Government Institution has been going in its own way. And there have been a lot of efforts instead of results. So what has been done is: a certain number of Ministries have been identified. Institutions like the National Bank, for example, are a very important element if we take the financial aspect in relation to the remittance. It sets the rules, the regulations, and the systems. Ministry of Trade and Industry, which is mainly involved in the investment and trade, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the Immigration Authority are all essential. Addis Ababa City Administration is important because every Diaspora, every Ethiopian abroad wants to have a foothold in Addis. Somehow he/she comes here and wants to interact within Addis. Even though it is a self governing Administration, it was included in the Federal Institutions. The Ministry of Revenue is important especially for the investors, the privilege that they have to get. So we organized a Ministerial Committee of these six, seven ministries and institutions chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The committee meets twice a year; it has already established its regulations. As that was not enough, we realized that we needed to have a technical representation of these institutions that would meet periodically based on the program of action that they have laid out for the budget year. Each of these

institutions has appointed a specific department which deals with the Diaspora and we meet at the Department Head level chaired by the State Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs every month. We have had our fifth meeting last month. We check whether each institution is following its plan of work and what problems were faced. We exchange information as well as try to come up with solutions so that each representative will go back and inform his/her superior on what has been done and what the problems were and problems that need solution from the higher up or action to be taken. This is one forum. It is not only at the ministerial level, even at the Prime Minister's level there is an office headed by a minister that actually follows up this coordinated approach.

At the regional level, each Regional State has been required to open a Diaspora office not only at the regional capital but to actually institutionalize this to the woreda level at least the major cities or towns where they have mayors and municipalities. At each municipal office they are trying to set up a Diaspora list so that every Diaspora member that comes to his/her country would go to his/her locality obviously to visit the family. He or she needs information at what is being done there, what the problems are, the challenges that the local administration is facing and how they can help. And, as my brother said, information is very important and we have not been effective in transmitting what we are doing. Each region has formulated its program of action for the budget year and they are required to setup these offices to the woreda level and to have the necessary data. So it is better these regional governments have interface with these people, have to solve their problems because the information flow is much more effective if done informally than it is officially because they inform their families almost every month. They check, they find out what is done in the area so the information flow through the families is very important. That's where we are targeting.

The other effort we are making is: we are trying to have a representative organization of those that come back so that they will get represented themselves. We are in the process of creating a core group, and once we create that we prepare a terms of reference that they can amend and change. Once we create this representative body of those Diaspora Ethiopians that have come and invested here or are in different activities then they could directly interface with this Ministerial Committee that I have mentioned or with the regional governments. Because we have a forum we are going to have a forum of this institutions so that they will also be representing and have a direct communication with the concerned authority and find solutions to their problems.

In addition, we have about 19 diplomats particularly related to Diaspora issues to various major embassies where we have the largest number of Ethiopians. In the United States, we have embassy in Washington but also another consulate in Los Angeles on the

western side and there we have assigned diplomats in Washington about six of them, one in New York, one in Los Angeles, two in Ottawa, London, and Frankfurt. Middle East, Riyadh, Jeddah, where we have most of the problems especially for those labor migrants. We can communicate with our communities abroad and explain to them what the programs are. At the same time if they want to be organized, if they want any kind of service, they will easily get the information.

The Addis Ababa City Administration has also organized itself to the sub city (kifle ketema) level. It has opened a Diaspora office and is trying to get a website where every Diaspora wherever he/she is, can get full information of what he/she needs to know about Addis whether he wants to invest or she wants to do business or other issues with the administration and do it while being there before coming and then coming home to do the actual work. So these are the kinds of work that we have started but as I said before we have not been effective in communicating this. We have tried but hopefully once this effort takes root what we hope is that there will be an institutionalized approach to the Diaspora issue because every member of our Ethiopian brothers and sisters abroad would want to have a link with his/her country and locality. That is what we have seen. Those of us who go abroad know that right now there is this phobia, there is this fear of returning back and, of course, peace, democracy and good governance are the basics that need to be cemented to establish effectively so that people can feel that they can contribute, that they can be part of it. These are the things that I wanted to share because of the points raised by my brother from the Diaspora. Thank you.

Comment: Dr David Kamara

Thank you, Chair.

I'm Dr David Kamara, representative of ECA. I'm very sorry to be coming very late that is because I was held up in the ECA. I think this meeting is very important because what we heard is that Ethiopia wants to bring back the Diaspora to work for Ethiopia to help the development effort. Such an idea coming from an NGO is very important and commendable. We at the ECA would like to encourage and support such efforts coming from an NGO. That is all I want to say. Thank you.

HIBRET LELIMAT MA'EKEL STRATEGIC PLAN

Dr Tewabech's Bishaw
Managing Director, Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel

Country Context

I will begin with the country context so that we have a common understanding and background on the rationale that led to the conceptualization and establishment of an NGO, Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel (HLM) that is launched today. As we all know and from what we heard this morning from the various speakers, Capacity Building (human resource and institutional) has been prioritized as a vital input for sustainable development of the country. We also know that there is shortage of qualified human resources in the country. It is also realized that many qualified Ethiopians have left and are leaving the country aggravating the shortage. On the other hand there are highly qualified Ethiopians in the Diaspora some of whom are willing to participate in national effort to develop their country of origin. Another fact is also the growing realization by members of the Diaspora and by professionals and development workers in the country on the unique role the Diaspora can play in the country's development. It is further realized that initiatives to mobilize Diaspora's participation in Ethiopia's development are emerging. In addition, the Diaspora's potential to contribute to mainstream development and social change has been acknowledged by many countries especially in the developing world. It is in the above context that HLM was established as a development partner for Ethiopia's *Brain Gain*.

What Is HLM?

HLM is an indigenous non-profit non-governmental organization (NGO) created to support the country's nation building effort and to contribute to alleviating the gap in human resources and institutional capacity by facilitating the inflow and utilization of intellectual and other resources from the Diaspora and friends of Ethiopia into the country. We have defined Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel as a development organization; "development underlined"- because it is a development organization focusing on capacity building. It's also an organization that strives to establish linkages between Ethiopians in the Diaspora with professionals and institutions locally towards contributing to addressing human resource needs of the country. HLM is established to operate in collaboration with existing development partners inside the country and internationally.

What are the Objectives of HLM?

- Develop and maintain up-to-date database on volunteer Diaspora members and friends of Ethiopia; as well as information on institutions locally on their specified priority needs etc for ready availability and exchange.
- Facilitate processes to improve coordination and networking for increased channeling of available intellectual resources (knowledge, skills technology), material and other resources from the Diaspora and friends of Ethiopia to contribute to human resource and institutional capacity building.
- Support the creation of enabling mechanisms in local institutions to improve efficiency in accessing and utilizing Diaspora inputs to meet their development goal.
- Encourage and strengthen collaboration between trainees and researchers in the Diaspora and institutions locally for joint undertakings for skills, knowledge and experience exchange and transfer.
- Support networking between youth in the Diaspora and locally to undertake joint projects and programmes for cultural, information and experience exchange.
- Provide platform for dialogue on development issues between experts in the Diaspora and locally to influence policy and programming.
- Facilitate processes to support related logistics and for mobilization of resources.

There have been some questions as to why we even need to bother with the Diaspora. Yes, we have reasons to bother with the Diaspora because we appreciate that it has rich intellectual resources that could be tapped to support the development process of their country of origin. We know from experiences of other countries that Diasporas make vital input to development. HLM is thus trying to help in facilitating processes through development of database on Diaspora resources, facilitating two way flow of information, and needs and process analysis so that there will be a systematic documentation and bench marking for prioritization, system building and for monitoring performance.

What are the Global Experiences in Relation to Diaspora?

I will share some of the experiences that we were able to identify from documents on the subject. To cite a few, we learned that Nigeria has Association of Nigerians Abroad (ANA), in South Africa there is the South African Network of Skills Abroad (SANSA) and Tunisia has Tunisian Scientific Consortium (TSC), India has a Ministry for Diaspora Affairs helping their respective countries by mobilizing and facilitating inflow of Diaspora resources into the country. In Ethiopia we have emerging experiences. Some organizations like ENAHPA, People to People, Ethiopian Knowledge Technology Transfer Society, Ethiopian Tree Fund Foundation and others making efforts to mobilize resources from the Diaspora in an organized manner to help national development.

Benefits

This effort is believed to contribute to human capital development. It also is expected to encourage young professionals to remain in the country. The primary aim of Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel is to facilitate incremental inflow of intellectual and other Diaspora resources for capacity building and supporting local institutions to strengthen their capacity for efficient and effective utilization of this critical input to meet their developmental goal. Once that is achieved, improvement in institution building, economic development, social change, and improvement in excellence of institutions could create enabling environment and attract many professionals to come to the country and/or retain young professionals from leaving the country. This could also create opportunity to re-establish dialog among professionals in the country and abroad. It can also serve as an entry point for sustained channeling of Diaspora resources -- knowledge, skills, and technology including financial resources in investment in the country creating a win-win situation between the Diaspora getting the gratification of contributing to the development of their home country as well as institutions in the home countries benefiting from the much needed Diaspora resources.

Ethiopia's Current Scenario and Experience

There is a continuous outflow of intellectual resources. A large pool of skilled, knowledgeable and experienced Ethiopians exist in the Diaspora; a large pool of youth in the Diaspora are eager to establish network and linkages with their age-mates in Ethiopia; and possibilities exist where Ethiopian trainees in the Diaspora could benefit through collaborative linkages and attachments with institutions locally.

On the other hand few organizations and associations are making head way in mobilizing the Diaspora for nation building. But do not have mechanisms for networking to benefit from the synergistic effect from the collaboration to impact the development. As a result

these inputs are sporadic, unpredictable, and not sustainable. There is a need to create and strengthen the system where this input could be predictable, sustainable, and continuous to be relied and counted on as part of the development input. Some of the systems that were earlier sited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and also some of the concerns that were expressed by the Diaspora participant this morning could be facilitated and addressed to ensure continuity of input from outside to contribute to national development.

We know that when a Diaspora input, especially the intellectual input is attracted into the country, they have to fit into ongoing development efforts. This requires deliberate planning and seamless arrangement so that there is a continuity of input to support and sustain ongoing programmes of that specific organization or institution. It requires joint planning, detailed analysis and articulation on the need and the level of flexibility needed to accommodate Diaspora input. For example, if we bring in say 500 Diaspora members with the required skill and expertise here and now unless there has been systematic planning to fit this input into the ongoing development effort of each benefiting institution the input could even be disruptive. When we say developing institutional mechanisms and facilitating processes, these are some of the processes that need to be carefully analyzed systems instituted.

HLM's Vision

The vision of HLM, as can be read from the strategic document or the brochure, is to see a full mobilization and utilization of Diaspora resources to facilitate optimal brain gain and capacity building for poverty alleviation, socio-cultural and economic transformation for the livelihood and prosperity of the Ethiopian people. It aims to see the full mobilization and utilization of Diaspora resources.

HLM's Mission

First is to coordinate a productive synergy between the Diaspora input and development initiative and efforts in the country;

Second is to contribute to creating enabling means to strengthen institutional capacity so that the institutions are enabled for increased absorptive capacity of the incoming intellectual resource and other input from the Diaspora that will contribute to the achievement of the institutions' development goals;

And third is to facilitate and streamline processes, starting from acquisition of vital information up to utilization of incoming input, to detailing the mechanisms as to how these processes can be facilitated and enhanced for efficiency and effectiveness.

So creating systems, facilitation and streamlining processes, creating enabling means and contributing to capacity building as well as coordinating and interfacing between the Diaspora and institutions locally are the key missions.

HLM's Core Values

HLM has a set of core values that include:- Being need-based and problem-solving; it has to be efficient and sustainable, because development is a sustainable process; commitment to excellence and professionalism; transparency, public accountability, participatory and people centeredness, tolerant and mutual respectfulness; being inclusive and empowering, voluntary and dynamism are the core values of HLM.

Broad Strategic Objectives

The broad strategic objectives of HLM are divided into three phases. Phase one, a period between 2007 and 2010 will be time to strengthen HLM while at the same time undertaking initiatives and activities so that the NGO will be a very dependable and efficient entry point for incremental channeling of Diaspora resources into the country. We know that as of today, there are very few if any such organizations planning to address Diaspora issues systematically. Yes, we have heard that Government structures will be there to assist and provide leadership but in terms of an indigenous non-governmental organization HLM will be the first one. We therefore believe that between 2007 and 2010 HLM will grow to become one of the dependable entry points for incremental channeling of Diaspora resources. It doesn't mean that there will not be others, but we will work together, and build each others' strength for better result.

In the period between 2011 and 2015 there will be a realization of a sustainable national policy and system in place so that the Diaspora resource will have a continual and systematic inflow into the country to maximize the benefit of the development effort. Again during this period, there will also be better coordination and contribution to creating synergy and harmony among the various development players that are working on mobilizing Diaspora resources into the country so that there will be a sustainable transfer of knowledge, skills and technology into the country.

During the period between 2016 and 2020 we believe that HLM will play a lead role in networking and sharing of experiences within the country, in the sub-region and in the continent at large and also may contribute to the global effort of maximizing brain gain.

Now with this background and focus the development of the strategic plan has looked who the collaborators are, what are the means and mechanisms of collaborating, who the partners in the country are -- starting from the various sectoral ministries, the private

sector, to community organizations, and so on. It has also looked at what could be done to enhance this collaboration among the various players in the country.

Opportunities

The strategic document has also looked into existing opportunities. There is a real urgency to address knowledge and technology gaps into Ethiopia to accelerate development processes. There is a growing IT infrastructure and technology to facilitate the transfer of this knowledge. There is also a trend in globalization that can enhance exchange of knowledge from inside and outside. And there is a growth in the private sector that requires highly qualified and competitive human resources that can be an attraction. There is an expansion of educational institutions, health facilities, research and other development infrastructure in the country to absorb intellectual input to accelerate sustainable development. Hence the call on Diaspora's active participation in development is highly justified.

Threats

Some of the threats that were identified include:- possibility that there could be inadequate support at various levels to achieve the objectives and goals that HLM has set out; limited public awareness on Diaspora issues; limited effort by the coordinating bodies that consolidate coordination not yet realized. There is limited appreciation by local institutions on opportunities that exist in the Diaspora. Misconception and misrepresentation exist among local professionals on what it means to attract Diaspora resources to support the efforts that are ongoing in the country. There could also be lack of financial resources to bring in increasing number of the Diaspora to participate in national development that remain as a threat. Limited integration exist requiring better coordination for improved results avoiding duplication and confusion sometimes. The IT system, although growing, is still inadequate to fully be readily available to absorb, for instance, use of virtual means for communication, information exchange and follow-up. Also Diaspora related activities or initiatives so far have been in peace meal and individual efforts not impacting on development as such. The country's under developed economy and its consequences in backing such kind of undertakings, inadequate documentation and sharing of experiences are among the areas identified as threats.

Strengths

The availability of committed Diaspora members who are willing to participate in the country's development is among the key strengths. There is also an appreciation and creation of an enabling policy environment to attract Diaspora members into the country.

There is a critical mass of knowledge and resources in the country on which we can build and we believe that the Diaspora input can catalyze these processes for better results.

Weaknesses

Among identified weaknesses are the lack of full-fledged, standardized administrative systems and work processes that facilitate Diaspora participation in development, as sited by the Diaspora representative. In fact this is the reason why such organizations like HLM should and need to come into being to work with other players in the area so that these mechanisms could be put in place to facilitate the Diaspora's participation in development. The inadequacy of policies to guide the mobilization and utilization of Diaspora resources is another weakness. Policies could be there but in terms of making the policies known by all interested parties and making better use of policies is an area where we need to work on. The limited number of Diaspora volunteers available in the various fields could also be among the weaknesses that will be sited.

Major Strategic Gaps

Having identified strengths and weaknesses there was a process of brainstorming and consultation with various development partners to identify strategic gaps. Some of these include:- increasing demand for new knowledge, skills, technology and other resources in the country; shortage of qualified human resource; need for full-fledged and standardized administrative work processing mechanisms easing the processes needed to attract and facilitate for the Diaspora to come and join the development initiative. Limited financial support; inadequate policy reflecting to harness the Diaspora resources; concrete political support in terms of concretely interpreting the support into action so that everybody knows that political support is indeed there to encourage and give confidence to Diaspora members to participate. The lack of continuity in implementation of brain gain activities, most of which are sporadic, lack continuity and sustainability; limited access for utilizing existing ICT infrastructure again have been sited as one of the development strategic gaps.

Lack of a comprehensive and up-to-date database on the Diaspora resources is one of the major constraints. There is information, as mentioned by the IOM representative, that there were a number of Ethiopians and Diaspora members that indicated their interest to come and participate. This number is in the range of 500, but that is not all Diaspora resource that we have. There are also attempts by various organizations in the United States, Sweden and other countries that are making efforts to develop database on Diaspora to know what resource exist but again the database is scattered, incomplete and out dated. There is a need to bring all these information together so that everybody

engaged in development efforts will know what resources there are to support in building national capacity. Information on priority needs of institutions in the country is another gap. Inadequate documentation and sharing of experiences on lessons learned to date on how Diaspora is mobilized for development, what are the facilitating and constraining factors need to be documents for timely solutions. Limited integration, networking between organizations, institutions working in the Diaspora and also between the Diaspora, within the Diaspora itself and between the Diaspora and local professionals is another area identified as a gap.

Strategic Issues (Key Success Factors)

Having analyzed these gaps, about five major areas for action were identified. First is Capacity Building; the second, Knowledge and Technology Transfer and Exchange; the third, Networking and Partnership for synergy; the fourth, Advocacy, Information, Communication and Education; and the fifth, Needs Assessment, Situation Analysis, Operations Research, Monitoring and Evaluation. These are the five major areas for action. Within these five priority areas the key success factors have been identified and listed down so that it can drive HLM and development partners in the plan of action and the way forward.

Implementation, Research and M&E Plan

Here what is viewed is more indicative of detailed implementation plan. Project implementation, research, monitoring and evaluation plans have to be looked into in a much more detail using complete information and data. HLM will use need assessment situation and process analysis, operations research to develop baseline information for process, outcome and impact analysis. Formal tracking and frequent monitoring, evaluation and feedback on interventions; ensuring active participation of constitutional bodies like the various committees of HLM with its development partners and also active participation of Diaspora volunteers, and volunteers who are participating to achieve HLM's objectives is another area that will be focused on during implementation. In its implementation, HLM would ensure transparency and accountability at all levels, maximize utilization of existing experiences and expertise and try to document and share experiences and lessons learned. Coordinate and network with development players in the country and outside, for experience exchange and coordination. HLM plans to utilize a lean and efficient organizational structure.

I thank you for your attention.

Question/Comment: Dr. Tesfaye Teshome, MoE

I appreciate HLM for taking an initiative to come up with such a very pertinent issue of addressing the Diaspora. The first thing one has got to do is to come up with this kind of strategic document. It gave me a very good impression when I read the introductory part, because the problems statement has been very well coined. We know that Ethiopia gets a huge amount of money in terms of remittance and its contribution to the GDP, 12.1% is huge; and had the Diaspora got a chance to work here in Ethiopia, that would have a multiplication factor of forty times of what Ethiopia gets in terms of remittance. These are very honest, good problem statements which we'll have to address.

On page 2: The mechanisms for reversing brain drain have been already detailed. I wish if some of the mechanisms are looked into very seriously, the pros and cons, to spell out specific statements in order to achieve the objectives.

On page 5: There are specific values which HLM has to take as core values, societal values or institutional values, but some of them need to be looked at as they might not necessarily be values.

On page 6: There is a big difference between objectives and specific activities one has to do in order to meet those objectives. For instance, the objective for 2007 up to 2010 says: be the dependable and efficient entry point... The objective would be better coined as: *Incremental channeling of Diaspora will be achieved*. If the statement starts with a verb it will sound more like an activity which has to be achieved at the end of the day rather than an objective.

The objective for 2011 to 2015 could have been re-coined as: *Sustainable policy on maximization of brain gain would be achieved*. So in order to achieve that then I do this and that, will come later on.

The same thing goes to the next statement that would better be coined as: *Synergy and harmony among different developmental organizations will be created*.

2016 to 2020: *Networking and best practice will... and acted up on for maximization of brain gain*. This is the objective we would like to meet at the end of the day. So this is a matter of refining statements to add quality to the document.

On page 7: Stakeholders and collaborators analysis, it seems that everything has been written in light of the activity which HLM has to do. There is in fact a two-way interaction between the stakeholders and the HLM. In stakeholder analysis one has to see

as to why one works with the Ministry of Justice or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These institutions have a stake in the Diaspora as does HLM. We have to write the rational and then what sort of synergy we are going to have. This has to be made very legitimate and clear.

On page 10: SWOT analysis, it is always good to frame activities in a time span. On the weaknesses, when we have to take necessary actions it is good to have time frame. And then list down input parameters you have to have in terms of human, financial resource and their expected out puts. It would also be good to have success indicators or performance indicators. They are said measurable here.

Question/Comment: Ato Haile-Selassie Kebede

Thank you very much. I represent Ethiopian knowledge and Technology Transfer Society (EKTTS). I would like to draw your attention to page 3. Because this is a document circulated to different organizations, I want to set the record straight. I found the statement given about EKTTS an under statement to say the least. There are also fallacies in what it says. Because it has been an organization which is in operation for the last five years, it has been a pioneer in mobilizing the Diaspora. I don't want to go into the details because there is no room for experience sharing in this discussion. I would have liked if there were some NGOs already in place to share their experiences to this workshop. It would have given an opportunity to look at the problems we have passed.

The second to the last paragraph says that EKTTS has distributed hundreds of thousands of books from the American NGO International Book Bank to schools in Ethiopia. This is an understatement because EKTTS works with more Ethiopians in the Diaspora than the International Book Bank. For your information in Ethiopia EKTTS was the first organization to support ENHAPA conduct its programs by devoting about 219,000 Birr for the transportation of 35 Ethiopians who came to Ethiopia. This was done in collaboration with Ethiopian Airlines and EKTTS should have been given credit for that. I don't know where this information comes from. We have not been approached, we are not given our worth so I would have liked in this statement either in this document or it should have been researched if you are mentioning.

Secondly, I would like to say that an International Book Bank is not the only source of books in Ethiopia. We have brought 1.3 million books into Ethiopia and supplied them to 11 regions, several public universities, more than 15 private colleges including not mentioning primary and secondary schools all over the country. So the primary source of our books was not International Book Bank but other Ethiopians in the Diaspora,

particularly Dr Solomon, the Bethany Negash Foundation, which is an Ethiopian Diaspora in North America.

The Ethiopian North American Health Professionals Association is an important partner we are still working with. They were also involved in the importation of two containers of their materials into Ethiopia at our expenses. We have also working relationship with the North-West Ethiopian Professionals Association in North America for whom we distribute books. We have very strong ties with the Canadian-based Ethiopian Diaspora known as Society for the Transfer of Educational Resources and Expertise in Ethiopia. We have very strong connection with Ethiopian Books Project for Ethiopia. I can go on listing many others. I'm not trying to boost the contributions of EKTTS but to indicate that documents have to be clearly stated. So I would recommend that this part of the document be edited.

I'm a little bit offended by the statement which says that unfortunately those efforts are somewhat uncoordinated, lacking continuity and predictability. This is again an understatement on our part. We have been in operation for five years mobilizing books, computers, inviting the Ethiopian Diaspora to come on various missions in partnership with Ministry of Capacity Building and the Ministry of Health. I'm surprised that our contribution has not been mentioned by the representative of the Ministry of Health. Our efforts have been continuous; we have brought an average of 14 containers per year for the last five years. This involves 1.3 million books, 1500 computers for various universities and colleges. There are future programs related with twining local universities with universities abroad and establish student internship program.

Almost all the time NGOs with such a magnitude of responsibility would obviously face financial constraints and it is important that they work with national organizations. I have seen so many Ministries listed here but many of the universities are bogged down by their duties to give attention to NGO activities. The best strategy will be to coordinate the various NGOs however small or big they are, design a system and a mechanism where this various NGOs, charity organizations, and community associations come together, share whatever they have to multiply the effect of the Diaspora. I say that because it is mentioned in the document that resources will come from volunteers. There must be specific source of finance and with such a huge task ahead of this organization I would like to know more if there is any specific source at least to row the boat. Thank you very much.

Question/Comment: Admasu Askabe, Tibebe Ethiopia

Thank you.

First of all I would like to express my delight in the formation of HLM and I wish that it maintains its dynamic start in its future. Regarding the strategic document and its content, I would like to make one or two observation.

I think this discussion is all about networking, and HLM is now using networking, linkages which are very well expressed. I want to talk about investment networking. I'll give you information on that which I've not seen in the document. Currently Ethiopia is doing nice work in bottom up investment networking through Tibeb Ethiopia. It started with the concept that all Ethiopians are investors. My suggestion is that we will work together involving the Diaspora in the investment programs of the country. What we mean by investment networking of Ethiopia is, like any networking it must be concrete, comprehensive and linking everyone, everywhere at any level and at any time. The first important thing is that we are all Ethiopians. We organize all Ethiopians to invest without any exclusion. We have gone to the extent of saying let us organize the unborn, the dead. We can discuss details later on as we are going to work together.

The second one is about organizing marketable knowledge. Globalization is the theme for the day, what about saying bottom up globalization. So in this document or even in the HLM activities please let's consider marketable knowledge. The third is about organizing the local market starting from the *gullit* to the global market. The world is about market these days. The fourth is about organizing and networking capital from 10 cents to millions of birr. This is happening. The fifth is about organizing and networking good governance. Good governance starts from each one of us. The last one is organizing and networking the opportunities of the poor. I'm talking about affirmative action so that the poor should not be excluded from globalization.

So these are the kinds of ideas involved in the Tibeb Ethiopia Network. It is a legal organization and is happening. It has proposed six agendas for the millennium which we shall make available formally to HLM. Thank you.

Question/Comment: Ato Bantirgu Hailemariam, Country Director, Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief

I have seen the document which is nicely prepared and has all the details that is required. But when I look at the implementation plan, section 7, I see that whole activities are outlined in all the years round, except the first one, two, three, and capacity building, the rest have been along all the years from 2007 to 2010. Is there any prioritization?

Second, are there certain things that should be done and completed within 2007 and gradually built up onwards? If that situation is forgotten we expect two things and may be constrained in achieving our objective. So I suggest that the sections on implementation plan be reviewed against this background so that each year has its own project activity and its own targets. Thank you.

Question/Comment: Ato Hailu Meche

On page 6: The broad strategic objectives are classified in a specific period and they indicate of course the long objectives of the organization. But what I suggest is that each period should have its own strategic plan so that it will be possible for the organization to monitor it and then to identify the weaknesses and strengths through the SWOT analysis.

On page 10: I'm not sure if page 10 is necessary at this point in time, The SWOT Analysis for the Internal Environment. This is meant to analyze the organization which is not functioning now. Or we have to be very selective like what we have started on the top board. I understand that members are elected and they are in place, so is the executive committee. But if you go down to the weakness, some of the factors seem to indicate self defeating mechanism for the organization. If we take the executive committee, it says insufficient resources but the organization has not started yet. It has to get the resources. But saying insufficient resource at this point may not be right. And about structure, it says not tested, of course it is not tested because it is a new one. So I think we have to have an option either to take it out or at least to be selective. The other is, though not under the organizational structure, it is an internal matter I don't think we have to put it on the structure. The structure is very big but it is to be developed. Therefore I suggest that we take the note at the end of the page.

Thank you very much.

Answer: Dr Tewabech Bishaw, HLM Managing Director

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to respond to some of the concerns raised. As you can see from the program that was distributed with the invitation letter the expected outcome of today's meeting is to introduce HLM to development players like yourselves; to review and endorse the strategic plan; to mobilize support and resources; to initiate networks and partnerships; to identify those that are actively playing a role in this area of brain gain; and to enlist organizational and individual memberships. So we are presenting ourselves by way of introducing ourselves and get to know each other for networking in this field of development.

We also needed to get your comments and feedback on the draft strategic document to improve our plan. The comments that are made are relevant and we have taken note. We are seeking to belong to and also trying to know who the players are for improved harmony and synergy. Some of the suggestions made sound that we should have known this...done that...etc. We are glad that we received these comments today; it will help us to streamline our document. But please note that today is a starting point for us. We humbly accept the comments that you have made and will look into them seriously and incorporate as it fits our desired objectives.

Regarding efforts being made by other similar organizations, yes we noted that we didn't mention all the achievements of EKTTS here in our document, but this is true for many of the organizations we sited. We could not possibly site 100% of every one's achievements in a small document like this and to begin with that was also not our intention. There will be another opportunity where we will work closely with each one of you who gathered here so that detailed analysis, assessment and strategies will be drawn for harmony. That's also the reason why we showed the three blocks of time as our broad strategic objectives because we are trying to indicate the link between this strategic objective and the vision of HLM as a broad indicative of where we are heading. It is true we need to do a detailed situational analysis and needs and process assessment based on which concrete strategies and plans of action will be drawn. But for now it is just to indicate the direction as to which way HLM is trying to head and how it tends to achieve its vision. In fact, in my discussion with some of the key development partners I was asked how HLM ventured to develop a strategic document when we haven't even started assessment and analysis of situation at hand. My response to that was that this is only a starting point. But I assure you that the details have to be worked out and HLM will do that. Taking note of your comments, we will weed out some of the unnecessary things in the broad strategic document to make it more succinct to serve the purpose. But please do not take this as the final strategic document of HLM on which it is going to base its actions. It is a broad indicative strategy showing the direction of HLM vis-à-vis its vision. We accept your comments but I want you to know from where we have come to develop this document and brought it for your scrutiny to get useful input to benefit our document and our plan. I thank you for these most useful comments.

I think many of the questions raised on the work plans for the specific years and rightly so are as described in the background above. But your concerns will be dealt with in the next level of document. On resources, we did not indicate the resources required; we need to have more concrete work plans to match it with required resources. That will come up in a later document where we develop the detailed annual and biannual plans of action.

Regarding the question that was raised by Ato Admasu, there are many organizations in the various fields of development and each one of us has got our own niche. Like in your area you are looking at marketable knowledge and bringing investment from the top down. The niche for HLM is to focus on mobilizing the Diaspora intellectual and other related resources for capacity building of human resources and institutions. This is and will be, we believe, our area of specialization in the entire development arena. We want to focus on this and bring in that dimension of input, the intellectual resources into the country. Investment is an important input for the country's development; we also see knowledge as an important input and that is where our focus is. Some organizations specialize in investment and financial input, others in other areas. HLM's niche is intellectual input and we want to be known as such. But it is true that we need each one of us to work together to achieve the bigger goal. So I'm glad you have shared with us your area of expertise and specialization. There is a lot of room for all of us to collaborate with one another and achieve our individual and collective goals, and contribute to the national goal of accelerated and sustainable development.

Question/Comment: Ato Biruk, Addis Ababa Millennium Office

My comments are on page 8 number 8. I think according to our current ministerial administrative structure the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports has been divided into Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Ministry of Youth and Sports. And apart from that as you are aiming to work based on the Diaspora, we are expecting thousands and thousands of people to be coming for the millennium. So in this regard what are you prepared to accomplish to those people who are coming here for the millennium celebration. Thank you.

Question/Comment: W/ro Misrak Assefa, MoYS

I just want a correction on page 8 number 8. It says Ministry of Culture and Youth but this name has been changed. So please separate Ministry of Youth and Sport and Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Thank you.

Question/Comment: Dr Tesfaye Teshome, MoE

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

I think for HLM to be successful particularly in working with these line Ministries and achieve its goal, it has to look at the experiences of China and India. China has achieved high economic growth of about 9.1 % in ten years time transforming their economy to the

market economy. The highest contribution has come from the Diaspora, people living in Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand and USA and so on. The government has moved in that direction and worked hard. The same thing holds true for India. India has even taken this Diaspora issue critically. They have established an office at Ministry level. And any Indian Diaspora coming to India just pops into India to invest. All hurdles and bureaucratic chains and things which we have been always listening from the Diaspora will be settled before the Indian Diaspora land to India. So look into that kind of experience.

As another participant said earlier it is always good to do some kind of gap analysis. There will be huge gaps existing in Ethiopia. For example, external factors which might hamper your work. Try and give some priorities on which areas you are going to focus in the coming five years. This is a transparent document which I wish to be viable, live and dynamic to be used as a basic tool for achieving HLM's objectives. We have to maintain its quality.

The references are not exhaustive. Some of them are lacking. Look into it. I wish the references which have been listed are such that any interested person can go and have those documents for good background knowledge.

On the annex the organizational structure doesn't have any reference.

The SWOT analysis is really trying to identify the weaknesses and strengths, the opportunities and threats and you have a huge list of activities so please put them in a category: activities which are to be undertaken in order to capitalize on the existing opportunities and which are to be taken in order to solve the threats. Some kind of categorization can be done.

On page 15: I want the same comment I gave on the objectives earlier to apply for the objectives under each goals.

On monitoring and evaluation, I expect that HLM is going to go to report to the board for each and every executive committee. I think there are different types of mechanisms where you can monitor and assess such evaluation category at committee level, at department level, system wide evaluation. It is good to have a clear statement how the evaluation and monitoring is going to be taken so that everybody knows it and owns it. The basic resource has to be shared across the board. Information has to be understandable to all of the staff.

Thank you very much.

Answer: Dr Tewabech Bishaw, HLM Managing Director

The name Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of Culture and Tourism is more a typo than not knowing which Ministry is responsible for what. So again we apologize for that. We will take full responsibility and make the corrections right away.

The second observation was regarding learning from the experiences of China and India. Yes, it is true in India there is a Ministry of Diaspora and China is managing its Diaspora related issues at a very high level and institutionalized. We appreciate we all operate in different realities and those realities will guide our action. As it was stated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs representative, the Government of Ethiopia has already initiated administrative mechanisms and arrangements starting from Federal Offices to the Woreda levels ensuring representative offices for the Diaspora. Here a decentralized structure is being used in terms of addressing the issue of Diaspora. But yes we need to have an effective and problem solving arrangement for better gains from the Diaspora resources. We must learn from the experiences of these countries. These countries and others have seen the wisdom of utilizing Diaspora resources to develop their country. And there is a beginning here that need to be improved, accelerated, enhanced and streamlined for better results. The Ministries are the kind of institutions that are to be handled by the Government. But what we must learn is what the role of NGOs within the Indian, Chinese, Hong Kong, Korean and other countries' contexts in terms of supporting Governments to achieve the development goals of mobilizing Diaspora resources into the country. These institutions and other structures will have a place within the Government but NGOs need to act as catalysts and facilitators playing more supportive roles and advocacy as well as initiate model interventions for going to scale by government using lessons learned. We will study in more detail from various actions taken by NGOs in these countries to support efforts of brain gain that must primarily be taken up by the responsible duty bearer, which is the Government. Thanks for your observation and suggestion.

In terms of the document references and cross references, in detailing and concretizing actions by year and prioritizing them, we have taken note and will make sure that your suggestions are taken into consideration when we are doing the detail strategic document. Like I said, this is a three-year plan. Even the plan for 2007 to 2010 requires in-depth analysis. But for now it shows the direction that HLM intends to move in terms of mobilizing the Diaspora.

Regarding what HLM plans to do for the millennium, we want to take advantage of the opportunity created by the millennium where I've been told there are hundreds of thousands of Diaspora members coming into the country. Though we don't know what

the profiles of the visiting Diaspora members are, as I said earlier we are focusing on intellectual resources. To answer your question we have contacted Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Capacity Building and other relevant organizations including the Millennium Office and shared our intention to organize a one-day symposium where we will have an opportunity for dialogue between Diaspora members and other development players here in the country. This we believe will give us an opportunity to be better informed of what the expectations are from both parties and help us to further fine tune and streamline actions that we want to take based on experiences that we hear from Diaspora participants and institutions in the country. We are looking forward to this symposium to yield useful information for us to streamline our action to be more relevant to meet expressed needs.

Question/Comment: Ato Biruk, Addis Ababa Millennium Office

The millennium celebration involves entertaining the participants and media personalities from both local and international media agencies. This is because they are found crucial. And once again thanks for your answer.

Question/Comment: Dr Tamerat Retta

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Some 20 years or more back when most of us started real job in the country, we did have many foreign NGOs coming and working in Ethiopia. No one has ever asked them to present any such strategic plan, no question. They were coming, make two or three pages of presentation and that was it. But we have gone a long way today. Around this table there may be foreigners as well as Ethiopians involved in human resource utilization in terms of exchange. But the main issue is to say we have such a progress that an NGO which is launched today shall have this standard which has organized the operation. This launch today is submitted as long lived NGO to produce even to the extent of a detailed document. I appreciate this progress made in the last 20 years. That is one thing I wanted to note.

The second point I have is on Ato Haile-Selassie's remark, which is very well taken. He wouldn't have had that reaction had he not been true to himself and contribute. He has come here to contribute and I think it is one of the most valuable inputs I heard around the table. I would like to thank him for his input. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity.

Question/Comment: Ato Haile-Selassie Kebede, EKTTS

Thank you for giving me this second chance. As someone working for an NGO, there would have been many questions about the Diaspora but at the same time there is a necessity for looking inwards. We have many intellectuals at home retired for one reason or another either for age or changing their professions. These people have never been looked at. We have engineers, doctors, agronomists, businessmen, etc, lying around without being noticed. My organization has no plans for this but I would like to see this issue raised to see how we can bring it into the focus. These are senior Ethiopian citizens, men and women who have been serving the country for the best of their lives but now retired and are not being noticed. How do we bring these people into the picture and be a source of knowledge and inspiration, for the Diaspora? Because the Diaspora in general are young people with little experience about what is going on in the country, they have to be oriented themselves before they are put into use in the first place. So we need our engineers, our educators in the country to be organized and to come to the forefront in such meetings and contribute their share and give us guidance and inspiration on how to handle the Diaspora. Thank you very much.

Answer: Dr Tewabech Bishaw, HLM Managing Director

We are looking at the Diaspora as a pool of wealth of resources intellectual and otherwise. HLM is trying to mobilize the intellectual resource into active engagement to support the country's development efforts. Those professionals that are within the country are expected to be active players and partners for a catalyzed input that could again feed into the development initiatives in the country. However we must all appreciate that an input from a Diaspora is not just singular, it comes with multiple dimensions. He/she brings in the subject input, more motivation and stimulation, share experiences in multiple areas, become additional role models for the young, could be involved in investment, improvement of systems and processes etc. One important challenge for the institutions is to be flexible and open-minded enough to make best use of these inputs and also to ensure continuity.

For instance we bring in an archeologist from the Diaspora to work with archeology department. But if the expertise that the Diaspora member brought in is available among professionals in the country, but not in active duty, I think it is up to the institution and organizations like HLM to ensure that those much needed expertise within the market are effectively utilized. So there is an opportunity for local intellectuals that are not actively engaged here to take part in this initiative by actively engaging themselves in those types

of development exercises. However, I believe that the approach is going to be different and on a case by case basis. But definitely we must use effectively and efficiently what we have at hand. The efforts are complimentary and synergistic. Blend the input from outside as well as inside for maximum result. Talking about continuity of input, HLM will scout and solicit list of experts from different countries in the world and those in the same field could be organized to have their input arranged to have seamless continuity to yield desirable outcome. Organizing block training, use of virtual means, use of video conferencing etc could be used as a mix of approaches to ensure the continuity of required input.

India, Burkina Faso has got Ministry of Diaspora as you said. What does this indicate to us? This indicates the importance that the various countries in the world have given to the resources that they have lost. We don't want this precious vital resource to be out of the reach of development of this country. We want to use every means possible to attract these resources. We owe to our people. As I said earlier a mathematician coming here is not just bringing her/his mathematics knowledge but with it the national passion, the psycho-social stimulation, the role modeling and other investment and partnering with local intellectuals and professionals, with that biased Ethiopian-ness in it. It is not just bringing one person to add one and make it two but bring one person and add one to make it two plus. So there is the wisdom in looking for the Diaspora. Members of the Diaspora will also benefit in many ways than one, including the gratification of being able to the development of one's people and country of origin.

Yes, some of the Diaspora members could be young but there are many who are richly experienced. The opportunities that the Diaspora has are the access they have to those technologies, efficient systems and processes etc. from the economically advanced countries. This would enable them to bring state-of-the-art, but relevant knowledge and technology to this country to stimulate, catalyze, and accelerate the processes here. The Ministries, the organizations, the NGOs and others that are created in many countries on account of mobilizing the Diaspora is the realization that we, especially the developing countries, have lost these resources and need to create mechanisms to gain some of them. For instance if you look at some statistics in one locality within the Chicago suburb the number of Sierra Leonean doctors is more than the doctors that are in Sierra Leone itself. This is just in one suburb! But we also know that the population in Sierra Leone does not have adequate medical services as a result of these doctors leaving the country. We don't blame those people because they left their country for better livelihood. But what we want them to do is give back to the country and the people with added knowledge, skill, attitude, and technology. The energy that comes with a Diaspora member could synergize

with locally available resources, spark the fire, energize, and propel the development processes faster and farther.

Talking about statistics, the Ethiopian statistics is mostly anecdotal because we didn't keep adequate documentation of the people that have left the country: in what field, what year, and what specialization. We don't have that concrete information to talk about. From the countries who document those, we can see that developing countries, especially countries in Africa, are losing tremendous resources, intellectual, skill and commitment.

When we talk about the training of medical doctors, say the cost of training of a medical doctor is 60,000 USD. But in actual fact it is not only 60,000 USD, because before that student reached to the medical school the country has invested in him/her. What is the real cost of that. What will be the cost of education that the medical student gained from the day to day social encounter? When this person comes into the country to give to his own people, what is the value in that? Not just the arithmetic salary in monetary terms. Many of the input gained could not be expressed in monetary terms. It is rich and intense.

I was reflecting on a question that some one asked me about what is the amount of money that HLM would bring into the country if it was to achieve its objectives. But my answer is that it is invaluable. It is the monetary input plus much, much more.

My friend Elias, representing the Diaspora, was telling me about his encounter. That they are working on an IT system that would bring the entire book on a subject at the disposal of the students of higher institutions in this country. Just by touching the button of a computer a student will be able to access the most up-to-date text book in that subject. Can you see that? It is not just one student; it will be a student in Arba Minch University, Awassa University, Jimma, Mekele, Addis Ababa University, or any other university in the country. Having that access being provided by our Diaspora member cannot be quantified in terms of monetary value, because it is not calculable in that sense. Also young as he is, I am sure many young Ethiopians are stimulated by him, the role modeling, the possibilities that he is able to show cannot be quantified.

So what we are saying is that the rich Diaspora intellectual, human resources that this country has lost, or parted with if you may, could be brought back multiplied a hundred times more to support the efforts here. You have noted several times that we acclaim the generosity of a country X that granted us a million dollars assistance. But if we see just the figure of 60,000 US dollars to train a medical doctor times, say, a thousand doctors that we have lost, it is a lot of money, 60,000,000 million Dollars. Who acclaims that Ethiopia has given that much resource to the health sector of that other country? Have we ever heard any country enjoying the services of an Ethiopian doctor saying thank you to

Ethiopia. No! For instance in Botswana, we know that close to 40% of the medical service is staffed by Ethiopian doctors. But would Botswana recognize that Ethiopia has given Botswana that much resource in monetary terms? No! So these are the resources that we want to talk about, the resources that we want to bring in to Ethiopia so that the country and its people will not suffer the consequences of loss of the vital resource to serve the country and its people.

The issue of talking about the Diaspora is beyond one physical individual that we are taking about, beyond the salary to add to that person's remuneration. It is much more than that. So, I think that the reason why countries like Burkina Faso are having Ministries is because they realized the value. Are we not looking for gold, for minerals, for hydroelectric power? The Diaspora is a pool of intellectual power accumulated over many years and wide experiences. We add the number of Diaspora members and the number of years of experience that they have. It is hundreds of thousands of years of knowledge that we want to bring in to support the country's effort in accelerating the development.

More than 20 years ago I was heading the training department of the Ministry of Health, and at that time we were sending hundreds of medical and health professionals for post graduate education. But a few of them came back. And it used to bother us. It used to bother me. We are sending these people, pay for their education and they were not coming back. But then I used to say an educated Ethiopian anywhere is an asset. It is. That's one, and an educated Ethiopian somewhere will contribute to the wellbeing of his/her family back home. This is second. And if we create conducive environment these educated Ethiopians would come and contribute to the development of the country and prosperity of the Ethiopian people. There are opportunities for us now to bring them back and turn around the loss into a win-win situation so that we all gain. Those who have left for other countries could contribute and the institutions that lost them could gain. That is the rational behind looking at the Diaspora as a special, vital intellectual resource that could definitely contribute to accelerating the sustainable development of the country and prosperity of the Ethiopian people. It is a win-win situation based on mutual respect.

I thank you for your interest in HLM and thank you for your attention.

[The Chairman asked the gathering for its endorsement of the Strategic Plan Document and the house gave its unanimous endorsement.]

CLOSING REMARK

Ato Fiseha Tesfu
Director General, Department of Ethiopian Expatriates Affairs,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

I am sure I wouldn't be expected to summarize what all the presenters have said the whole morning. But I will try to make few highlights on the statements made and comments given on the contents of the strategic plan document presented. But before doing that, I just want to add to what Dr Tewabech was passionately talking about: why the Diaspora.

As I said in my statement the government has clearly stated and recognized that the role of the Diaspora is significant if we have to eradicate poverty, if we have to instill democracy in this country; this is the basic principle. For every Ethiopian who leaves this country and sees a different environment, especially in the developed countries, the first thing that we ask is what do we need to do to reach where these countries have reached. We were virtuous friends with the current representative of IOM, Mr. Chalres Kwenin; we did our masters together in Antwerp, Belgium before we again met here me as the head of the international organizations department at the Ministry and he as representative of IOM. When we were in Belgium every time we meet, every time we travel together, almost everything used to fascinate us: the train transportation system, the network, the facilities in the university, etc; and we never stop talking about what do we need to do in our countries? When are we going to reach this level? I'm sure it is every Ethiopian's question. There is one thing that I say: I wish we could take every Ethiopian outside the country and then bring him/her back, he/she would be more committed to his/her country than anyone else.

But there are also people who say, why the Diaspora? I participated in a television discussion program called '*Shay Buna*' on 'brain drain' that ran for three or four weeks, which I'm sure some of you might have seen. One of the questions repeatedly brought up was: you have people who complete their university studies here, do their masters here, and you are not doing anything for them yet you are trying to attract people who have left the country; it is true. First of all we need to accept the reality that people have left this country for various reasons; and they are leaving in their thousands even risking their lives. Day before yesterday, the BBC was reporting that more than 20 Somalis and Ethiopians were thrown over board by the smugglers when they were about to reach Yemeni shores. There are about 100, 150 Ethiopians in Libyan prisons for trying to go through. We don't know how they arrived there crossing the Sahara Desert from Sudan in

the first place. So what do we do? The educated and skilled Ethiopians as well as the uneducated are leaving the country. And they have been leaving the country for decades. These are our assets. It is not to deny that the people in the country are the ones that determine the development of this country. It is those of us who are here who can solve the issue of poverty eradication in this country. The government can probably facilitate by formulating policies, but the actual work is done by each one of us. The point is those in the Diaspora have a role to play as it was said by others before; not only in the knowledge and skill transfer area but in other aspects as well.

In trade we have about 40 embassies and consulates, with 4 or 5 diplomats in each embassy and one or two in some consulates. What can these people do to sell Ethiopia's products? If we have to play our role in a globalized world, we have to compete and sell our products. If we can get the Ethiopians who know the culture, the surroundings, who have their networks, to be involved in selling these products, it will be a plus to the many diplomats that we have. It is the same for attracting investment; we gain a lot if we can get them to cooperate and be a part of the effort. They can benefit personally out of this and also benefit their country and people, nobody loses, it is a win-win situation. Therefore, there are many aspects as to why we have to pay attention to the Diaspora.

Recently I was with the delegation led by the State Minister of Labor and Social Affairs visiting the Philippines, organized by IOM. There they told us that in 2006 Philippines earned 14 billion USD in remittance. In 2005 their income was 12 billion USD. They are forecasting more than that for 2007. India gets more than 28 billion USD in remittance. Not just that, the Indian government is not only having a Ministry of Diaspora but they have also created research centers where their scientists abroad can come and do their research. They have created the environment there and indeed have the capacity. Can we do that here given our capacity? I don't know. But at our level everything possible is being done. And it needs the collaboration of everyone not only HLM but every institution, NGO and individual. This is the issue. Sometimes it can be misconstrued or misunderstood, but we need to clarify this to everyone who listens to us that they have a role to play and that role is significant politically, economically and socially.

Having said this, I want to highlight some of the points raised this morning. His Excellency Ato Fikru Desallegn, State Minister of MoCB, stressed on poverty reduction through development and pointed out that human resource is the key to development and the relevance of HLM in relation to human resource is significant as clearly stated in the strategic paper. He also mentioned the coordination and collaboration of efforts in all sectors, importance of streamlining the mechanisms that we use. As Dr. Tewabech was saying before, each one has a role to play; it has its own niche. A total sum of all those

activities and the way in which we coordinate ourselves, we streamline the mechanisms that we interact with, or we implement our strategic plans, day to day activities is very important. It can be put on paper but we can only learn by doing it.

From the Ministry of Youth and Sports we heard about the comprehensive national youth policy and the ten- and five-year strategic as well as development plans. The professional and technical support to the youth was also emphasized clearly. The young are the future of this country. That is one of the major areas of investment that everyone needs to work on. HLM too has clearly stated what it wants to do in relation to the youth.

In the statement made by the Ministry of Education, the most significant emphasis was given to the knowledge transfer that can be gained from the Diaspora. The expansion of the TVET, the technical schools, the universities was mentioned. The number of students who are sent for studies abroad and who do not return; specifically the impact of this loss on the medical sector was emphasized. Of course, many of our medical professional are coming and assisting but others could also participate through technological means.

Ministry of Health also stated the existence of a huge gap in the health service sector, and the various initiatives in place from the Diaspora. Regarding the problem in the rural areas, the government has laid out the health extension program which has its various aspects; but if the rural areas are not given the basic services whatever we do in the urban areas is not going to change much. When we talk about the Diaspora, the contribution they can make is not only to the urban areas but has to relate to the rural areas also.

IOM clearly stated the approaches to the various programs that it had involved itself at different times in relation to returning back skilled people. Currently Migration for Development in Africa is already significantly being implemented in several countries. One joint program which we are going to launch very soon with IOM is Migration for Development in Ethiopia. It is a program of about three years in which we are going to bring certain professionals from the Diaspora to come and work here at different levels for different span of time in different sectors. The first priority is given to the health sector. The UNDP has chipped in the seed money but we hope other donors will also contribute and I am sure HLM and others will also contribute in facilitating and assisting us in identifying those professionals that could volunteer to come and play their role.

From the Diaspora's perspective the issue of coordination and the lack of clear guidelines have been stated. And on the government side it was tried to clarify as to what we are doing in coordinating among ourselves as well as creating the institutional capacity both at home and abroad at the embassies. At the same time NGOs like HLM and others are a plus in making contributions in this area.

On the HLM strategic plan I cannot say much because it has been discussed fully but I will make one point. The document mentions inadequate policy to effectively harness the Diaspora resources as one weakness, a policy gap by the government. As I said this morning we are now putting in place those different structures and also working with organizations like HLM. When the Diaspora Ethiopians who have come home to invest and work here get organized, we would use them as the main source of contributors to the policy formulation. The government is in the process of working on a draft on this policy issue. But the contribution has to come from those who are actually involved in it. The major contribution would be expected from the Diaspora themselves as well as the organizations. The Ministry of Capacity Building has a very specific and comprehensive role to play because once the Diaspora come and want to be placed in different institutions, it is the Ministry which has to identify the gaps in the government institutions and determine which sectors have to be given prior attention. This is the order because if we cannot prioritize we will be touching here and there and will be at a loss.

Finally I would like to thank the Board of Management and all those who have contributed to the formation of HLM, specifically Dr. Tewabech who has made her effort to really get in touch with us, has shared her views, and has come with this document to share with us. HLM has actually enabled us all to be here and discuss on a strategic plan of a new NGO and how it relates to the issue that it wants to deal with and to be given views and comments on it, which is a new approach. This is quite a privilege for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as other government institutions that we have such Ethiopians who are really committed on this kind of issue. In the name of my Ministry and in my own name I would like to thank Dr. Tewabech, her board members and other staff for getting us here and allowing us to share this view together. I hope HLM will succeed. I also hope NGOs like EKTTS and others that are here as well as those who are not here and those who will be coming in the future will contribute and coordinate with HLM and those of us who are involved in this activity.

Thank you very much.

ANNEX

PRESS RELEASE

Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel, 29 March 2007, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The migration of skilled and educated personnel from developing to developed countries has long been a critical issue and an unsolved development problem. Thousands of African professionals leave their home country each year to pursue better prospects in other countries; both in and outside the continent. It is estimated that there are about 200 million immigrants around the world. African countries spend more than \$4 billion annually to employ about 100,000 non-African expatriates to fill professional gaps created by migration. Recently, the African Union (AU) has invited Africa's Diaspora to actively take part in the region's development. For instance, the priority of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is to develop Africa's human resources and reverse brain drain.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) estimates that more than one million Ethiopians live outside the country, particularly in North America, Europe and Middle East. These émigrés, commonly known as the Ethiopian Diaspora continue to contribute to the economic and socio-cultural development of their host country. As a result of emigration, Ethiopia is losing its skilled human resources and is experiencing shortage of qualified and skilled personnel in the private and public sectors, especially in education, health, engineering and science. And a variety of expatriates are being employed in the country to compensate for the shortages of qualified and skilled human resources. For instance, during the 2004/05 academic year, more than 530 expatriate instructors worked in different government higher institutions throughout the country.

*Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel (HLM) an indigenous, non-profit, non-governmental development organization registered in January 2006, is established to contribute to the strengthening of human resources and institutional capacity in identified priority sectors in the country **by linking Ethiopians globally and increasing opportunities for brain gain**. Its aim is to facilitate the transfer and utilization of vital knowledge, skills, technology and resources from the Ethiopian Diaspora and friends of Ethiopia into the country and in collaboration with local professionals and institutions to support in poverty reduction and sustainable and accelerated development and prosperity of the Ethiopian people. HLM is organized to operate in partnership with development forces nationally and internationally.*

HLM's launch at the Ghion Hotel today is expected to: - 1) Introduce HLM to its development partners; 2) Review and endorse HLM's Strategic Planning Document; 3) Mobilize support and resources for HLM; 4) Initiate networks and partnerships with key stakeholders; 5) Identify and establish links with organizations working on Diaspora and brain gain; and, 6) Enlist organizational and institutional membership for HLM.

H.E Ato Fikru Dessalegne the State Minister of the Ministry of Capacity Building is the Guest of Honor. The Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Health, Education and Youth & Sports; the International Organization on Migration, and a Diaspora representative will address at the launch. Over 150 Government and non-government organizations, the private sector, Ambassadors and Heads of Missions, UN and Bilateral Agencies, civil society and professional associations and the media are invited.